



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

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STATINTL

[Redacted]  
Coordinator for Academic Relations  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20505

STATINTL Dear [Redacted]

As I wrote you earlier, I am working on a book on recent Cuban history. In the meantime, however, the focus has changed, and it has become a biography of Fidel Castro, or perhaps better, a life-and-times-of the Cuban leader. I had hoped, on my last visit to Washington, to meet [Redacted] at the Cuban Analytic Center, as well [Redacted] in Bloomington at a scholarly convention. But the time was short, and I believe [Redacted] was out of town for a week, and so we never did get together. Now I am planning another research trip in early November. Perhaps it would be possible to arrange a meeting before I leave here. I might say that if it would be useful to you I should be pleased to send you a copy of my manuscript sometime next year when I send it to the publisher.

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I have an unusual request to make--and I would hope that we could take it up in Washington. It concerns the possibility that Fidel Castro's influence can be seen even as far away as Italy during the late 60s and early 70s. Let me sketch what I already know. The story involves the leftist Milanese publisher Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, who in 1957 smuggled the manuscript of Dr. Zhivago out of the Soviet Union and--to the consternation of the Russians--published an Italian edition. He also made it available to publishers in other countries. As a consequence, he was expelled from the Communist Party. In the same year his publishing firm also brought out The Leopard. Needless to say, he made a mint on both books.

Through the 60s he brought out editions of various leftist books, including some from Cuba. For instance, he printed an Italian version of Tri-Continental. In 1963, the Cuban revolutionary and one-time editor of the "official" newspaper Revolución, Carlos Franqui, came to see him about a proposed autobiography of Fidel Castro. Feltrinelli flew to Cuba, Fidel agreed, and work was begun. Feltrinelli sold American rights to Atheneum. He came to Cuba again several times, and in 1967 was expelled from Bolivia when he went to La Paz, allegedly to help Régis Debray in his trial. Back in Havana in early 1968 for the Cultural Congress, he is supposed to have picked up Che Guevara's Bolivian Diary for an Italian edition.

Castro never wrote the memoirs, of course. Besides, as Castro cozied up to Moscow at the time of the Czechoslovakian invasion, Feltrinelli wasn't a good man to be close to. But something strange seems to have happened to Feltrinelli. He became wildly radical--a la Cubana, as it were. He flourished pistols (Fidel Castro regularly gave pistols as presents) in the editorial offices. He seemed to fancy himself the Che Guevara of Italy. He published pamphlets on how to make

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Molotov cocktails. His shops sold cans of spray paint with the admonition: "Paint your policeman yellow!" And he began to back with his ample supply of money the terrorists of the left in Italy--assassinations, bombings, kidnapping. He also may have had contacts with the German Bader-Meinhoff group.

Did the Cubans put him up to this? It does seem as though he was hell-bent on being himself a guerrilla fighter--liberating Sardinia, for example. All this will be only a small part of my book. But it is important in demonstrating the wide-reaching ramifications of Fidel Castro's revolution. Later a Bolivian consul was shot and killed in Hamburg, Germany. He had been an officer chiefly responsible for Che Guevara's death. A pistol found at the scene was linked to Feltrinelli. And in March 1972 Feltrinelli--who had been on the run since 1969--blew himself up trying to dynamite an electric pylon outside Milano. He meant to cut off the power to the city's tramway system and perhaps interrupt the electoral campaigning.

Would anyone there be able to throw light on this strange story? Could we talk about it in November? I look forward to meeting you and your associates. If you should want to call me,

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Sincerely,

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